

Perspectives

FOR ACTIVE
MEMBERS
OF THE
NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC
EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT
SYSTEM

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Board Members:

Jon Strinden
Chairman

Thomas Trenbeath

Attorney General Appointee

Arvy Smith

State Health Officer Designee

Members Elected:

Mike Sandal, Joan Ehrhardt,
Ron Leingang, Levi Erdmann

Sparb Collins

Executive Director

Kathy M. Allen

Editor

PERS Board Election

The term of North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS) Board member Joan Ehrhardt expires on June 30, 2009. NDPERS is required to give notification of the vacancy and the election process to all active employees. The Board acts as the administering body to manage the Public Employees Retirement System, Judges Retirement System, Highway Patrol Retirement System, North Dakota National Guard System, Law Enforcement Retirement System the Uniform Group Insurance Program, Section 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, Prefunded Retiree Health Program, and the Section 125 FlexComp Program for public employees. In addition, three of the elected members

are selected by the board to serve on the State Investment Board.

The Board consists of seven members. The chairman is appointed by the governor. Three members are elected by the active membership, one member is elected by the retired membership, there is an attorney general appointee, and one member is the state health officer. The board meets once a month in Bismarck with the meetings generally lasting four to five hours. Board members are paid \$62.50 per meeting.

Any active employee of a department of the State of North Dakota, or of a political subdivision who participates in NDPERS,

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Are Current Market Conditions Causing You Concern?

Everyone is seeing the effects on their investments as a result of the current volatility in the market. If this makes you uneasy, you are not alone. But by using the common investing principles and developing and sustaining an action plan, you can insulate your portfolio during those volatile market conditions.

Following are two general rationalizations to consider:

- In volatile markets, it's common to feel uneasy about your investments. It's only natural. But rest assured, market volatility is completely normal and is to be expected. In fact, whether you invest in a lifecycle fund, manage your own investments, or choose to have them managed by a professional investment manager, the current market conditions may actually work to your advantage.

- Market fluctuations are nothing to fear: In fact, they're normal. By basing your investment decisions on good information, you can stay with the retirement savings goals and strategy you've set, without worrying about short-term declines.

Further detail and insights on the above rationales are contained in two publications available on the NDPERS web site:

- Principles of Investing in A Volatile Market
- Preparing Your Portfolio for Moves in the Market

**You may access our web site at
www.nd.gov/ndpers and click on:
**Principles of Investing
In a Volatile Market****

PERS Board Election

Continued from cover

may become a candidate for election to the Board so long as that department or political subdivision is not currently represented on the Retirement Board by a board member not up for election (NDCC 54-52-03). Currently, the Department of Transportation and ND State Land Department have members that serve on the Board, so employees from those agencies are not eligible to become candidates in the upcoming election.

An eligible individual must obtain the signatures of 100 active NDPERS members to be nominated as a candidate for the vacancy. Nomination petitions are available from the NDPERS office at 400 East Broadway, Suite 505, Bismarck, ND. You may request this information in writing, by phone or through our e-mail address at ndpers-info@nd.gov. The deadline to submit petitions is 4:00 p.m., Friday, May 1, 2009. Election ballots will be mailed to active members May 26, 2009 and must be returned no later than the close of business on Friday, June 12, 2009. Election returns will be tabulated on Monday, June 15, 2009.

If you have any questions about the election, please call the NDPERS office at 701-328-3918 or toll free at 1-800-803-7377 if you are outside the Bismarck-Mandan calling area.

iPod Winner Announced!

NDPERS is pleased to announce the winner of our "myHealth: Get your Health in Tune" promotion. Congratulations to Kelli Rice! Kelli completed the health survey available on the Health Dialog website during the month of June. Through this completion, Kelli's name was entered and selected in a random drawing to determine our winner!

Congratulations, Kelli!

Summary of Primary Legislative Proposals

The following summarizes the bills submitted to date for the 2009 legislative session. For more information or to review copies of the bills, please refer to our web site at www.nd.gov/ndpers and select NDPERS News from the menu.

LC Bill #111; PERS & Highway Patrol; Sponsored by PERS

Description: Relates to: payment of employee contributions and retirement benefits under the Highway Patrol and Public Employees Retirement systems; membership of the State Investment Board; member benefit options, member refunds, IRC compliance and board elections under the Highway Patrol and PERS systems, and participation and employer payments under the uniform group insurance program.

Committee Recommendation: Favorable

LC Bill #112; PERS & Highway Patrol; Sponsored by PERS

Description: Relates to: employer contributions and 13th check and 2% cost-of-living adjustment.

Committee Recommendation: No recommendation

LC Bill #113; Uniform Group Insurance Program; Sponsored by PERS

Description: Relates to pre-Medicare retiree insurance rates (reduces the ratio of pre-Medicare rates to active rates from 150% to 130% for two years).

Committee Recommendation: Favorable

LC Bill #114; PERS & Highway Patrol; Sponsored by PERS

Description: Increase the retiree health credit from \$4.50 to \$5.00 effective August 1, 2009.

Committee Recommendation: Favorable

LC Bill #118; Law Enforcement; Sponsored by Senator Lyson

Description: Creates a supplemental defined contribution retirement plan for state correctional and Peace officers.

Committee Recommendation: No Recommendation

LC Bill #206; Judge's; Sponsored by Rep. Klemin

Description: Creates a trust health care savings plan for all Supreme Court and district court judges participating in PERS.

Committee Recommendation: Favorable

LC Bill #33; Uniform Group Insurance Program; Sponsored by Senator Mathern

Description: Establishes a Healthy North Dakota health insurance plan.

Committee Recommendation: Unfavorable

LC Bill #84; Uniform Group Insurance Program; Sponsored by Senator O'Connell

Description: Relates to parity for health insurance coverage of prosthetics.

Committee Recommendation: No Recommendation

LC Bill #124; Uniform Group Insurance Program; Sponsored by Rep. Potter

Description: Relates to insurance coverage for colorectal cancer screenings.

Committee Recommendation: Unfavorable

LC Bill #125; Uniform Group Insurance Program; Sponsored by Senator Mathern

Description: Expands the uniform group insurance program to allow participation by permanent and temporary employees of private sector employers and by any other individual who is otherwise without health insurance coverage.

Committee Recommendation: Unfavorable

About the Patient Diabetes Program

Did You Know...

- NDPERS offers a diabetes management wellness program
- There is a statewide network of providers (most are pharmacies) that are very accessible and can accommodate your busy schedule
- You can improve your health AND get some money back on your diabetic prescription!!!
- You can enroll in this program today at www.aboutthepatient.net

NDPERS is pleased to offer a Diabetes Management wellness program. This service is provided by pharmacists and other health professionals throughout the state. The North Dakota Pharmacy Service Corporation administers this program.

The Diabetes Management program focuses on helping members better understand and control this harmful disease. There will be a series of up to six visits over a 12-month period with a designated provider selected by the member. The visits will take from 30-60 minutes to complete. The provider will review the member's health history, diabetes goals, recent lab results, and all of their current medications. The provider will then educate the member about their health conditions, make recommendations to improve their medication therapy, and refer them to other health care providers such as diet or eye specialists if needed. Information will be shared with the member's doctor to make sure that everything is done to meet their medication and

health goals. The member's health will be improved by utilizing the specialties of a variety of health care professionals.

Members will benefit from this program in multiple ways. Most importantly, their overall health will be improved. Secondly, members participating and complying with the requirements of the program will receive quarterly reimbursements for out-of-pocket co-pays spent on diabetic medications and certain medications used for kidney protection. Members can improve their physical and financial health by enrolling in this program!

Enrollment in this program is still open to eligible members. To be eligible, a member must be diagnosed with a type of diabetes. For additional information, you can visit the program website at www.aboutthepatient.net, or call Frontier Pharmacy, the Clinical Coordinator, at 1-877-364-3932. The entire cost of the program is paid by NDPERS.

Ready to Get Healthy in the New Year?

If you haven't already done so, please take the opportunity to log onto www.thedialogcenter.com/bcbsnd to complete the new Personal Health Assessment (PHA) questionnaire. The PHA can help you identify the areas in your life where you may need to make changes to improve your overall health and wellness, as well as learn what you can do today to have the biggest impact on your health tomorrow.

Although you may have at some point in the past completed the former Health Risk Assessment (HRA) available through the Dialog Center, you are encouraged to complete the new PHA as it extends beyond just lifestyle risks. It also assesses any chronic conditions, pain, and emotional health issues that may apply to you.

The PHA uses a simple set of questions to help you create an action plan that you can adhere to in order to improve your health. A virtual guide helps you through the assessment sections, and special interactive tools are used to allow you to determine the health changes you are ready to make today. Once you have completed the PHA, a personal "action plan" is created just for you based on your answers that allow you to begin making changes immediately. Included in your action plan is a wellness score, which is your own score based on what you can change (such as unhealthy habits) – not on what you cannot change (such as your family history). Furthermore, your top three health goals are presented, and each of your goals is broken down into three simple steps – read, talk, and do.

If you are ready to get healthy, the PHA can help. And what better time to conduct a wellness inventory than just before the new year. Log on today to complete yours!

www.thedialogcenter.com/bcbsnd
(click on the tab labeled
"Health Tools")

CIGNA Dental Plan Rate Increase

At its June meeting, the NDPERS Board approved the renewal of the group dental contract with CIGNA. The proposal is for a 9% across the board increase over the current premium rates. This increase is the result of high utilization of services and the effects of inflation. The following monthly premiums will apply January 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009:

Level of Coverage	Active Premium	COBRA Premium
Individual	\$35.10	\$35.80
Individual & Spouse	\$67.76	\$69.12
Individual & Child(ren)	\$78.64	\$80.21
Family (employee, spouse, child(ren))	\$111.30	\$113.53

FlexComp Plan... Filing Claims

Grace Period Claims

If you have a balance in your 2008 plan year medical spending account, you have the option to have eligible expenses incurred during the "grace period" from January 1 through March 15, 2009 reimbursed from the remaining balance.

Section B of the FlexComp Reimbursement Voucher SFN 16868 (7-2008) has a box to check if you want medical expenses incurred within the grace period reimbursed from your 2008 plan year account balance. If you do not check this box, your claim will be processed in the plan year in which expenses have been incurred. No adjustments will be made to your account to reprocess claims.

Deadline to Submit Claims for 2008 & Grace Period

The deadline to file medical and dependent care claims incurred in 2008 or during the grace period is April 30, 2009. Any unused amounts in a medical spending reimbursement account cannot be used for dependent

care expenses or vice versa. Any amounts remaining in these accounts after April 30 are forfeited.

Outdated Reimbursement Vouchers

FlexComp reimbursement vouchers with an earlier revision date than 7-2008 will no longer be accepted. The most recent form is available on our web site. Claims submitted on old forms with an earlier revised date will be returned.

For Additional Information

To learn more about the FlexComp Plan, obtain forms, or view your FlexComp account information, visit the NDPERS website at www.nd.gov/ndpers. If you do not have internet access, contact the NDPERS office at 701-328-3900 or 1-800-803-7377 for assistance.

IRS Increases Deferral Limits

The Internal Revenue Service has announced the dollar limitations for pension plans for tax year 2009. The following highlights the new changes that apply to the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan effective January 1, 2009:

457(b) Annual Deferral Limit	\$16,500
Age 50+ Catch-Up Limit	\$ 5,500
457(b) Special Catch-Up (3 years)	\$16,500

If you wish to change your current contribution level, you must complete SFN 3803 and submit to your payroll office or NDPERS.

The articles and opinions in this publication are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual. We suggest that you consult your attorney, accountant, financial or tax advisor with regard to your individual situation. This newsletter is available in alternate formats upon request. Printed on recycled paper.



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